

THE
**FUTURE
OF
AMERICA'S
NATIONAL
PARKS**

First Annual
Centennial Strategy for

Tonto National Monument

August 2007

CENTENNIAL INITIATIVE



Site: TONT

Year: 2007

Vision Statement

Tonto National Monument was established in 1907, federally staffed in 1933, and expanded in 1937. The park preserves two primary cliff dwellings built and occupied between roughly 1250 and 1450 as well as other archeological sites and the sonoran desert environment immediately surrounding them.

Tonto will continue to expand its use of science and technology in the management of the resources under its stewardship. Specifically, this means supporting scientific inventories and monitoring of natural resources, the highest quality documentation and professional assessment of cultural resources, and a respectful relationship with all tribes affiliated or associated with the park. This professional foundation will provide the necessary support to a robust interpretive program that uses technology as appropriate, reaches out to teachers and students physically and virtually, and offers alternative interpretations to a surprisingly complicated story.

Tonto will rehabilitate its Mission 66-era historic visitor center and complete construction of a new administration building, currently under construction. Both projects will employ a green philosophy. The administration building is being built of rammed earth - the first building of its type in the NPS system. Funding permitting, further reductions in CO2 emissions could be made by utilizing photovoltaic power for the building. The rehabilitation of the visitor center will include improved efficiency in heating/cooling as well as operational changes to improve energy performance. The park will continue to improve its fleet fuel economy by replacing older vehicles with more efficient ones, including an electric vehicle for local use.

Tonto National Monument is considering entering into agreement with Tonto National Forest to jointly manage a set of three nationally significant cliff dwellings on national forest system lands. The new knowledge gained from documentation, assessment, and research at these sites will significantly improve our understanding of the prehistoric builders in the area and enhance our interpretive offerings.

The park proposes to implement its core operations plan, improving financial flexibility while attending to the core mission of the park. However, as projected, budgets are not expected to cover all core needs.

Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager

Bradley S. Traver

Site: TONT

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Improve the condition of park resources and assets.

☒ Rehabilitate high-priority historic buildings to good condition, and help communities to preserve their history through programs like Preserve America.

The park proposes to rehabilitate its Mission 66 visitor center in a way that preserves historic fabric and design intent while bringing the building up to modern standards and adapting it for modern uses.

☐ The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

Site: TONT

STEWARDSHIP

☒ Serve as the Preeminent resource laboratory by applying excellence in science and scholarship to understand and respond to environmental changes.

☒ Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Continue to support scientific and professional inventories, documentation, and assessment of all park resources and resources jointly managed with other agencies. Documentation includes use of laser scanning technology for important cultural resources as the absolute best representation of existing condition. The park proposes to scan important archeological sites and incorporate the resulting digital information into existing GIS layers. When linked with image and text documents, the result is a one-stop source of all available scientific information about the subject site or its components. Further, the scans can and will be made into virtual models of the site. The models can be animated to show construction sequence, appearance at occupation, construction method, deterioration events, and almost anything necessary to tell the story in an interpretive exhibit.

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Site: TONT

ENVIRONMENT

☒ Reduce environmental impacts of park operations.

☒ Reduce the environmental impacts of park operations on air and water quality.

Tonto National Monument proposes to rehabilitate its historic Mission 66 visitor center in such a way as to improve its energy efficiency. Heating and cooling units will be replaced with more efficient units and building utilization adjusted to reduce heating/cooling demands.

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Site: TONT

ENVIRONMENT

☒ **Inspire an environmental conscience in Americans.**

☒ **Demonstrate environmental excellence through increased use of alternative energy and fuels at every park.**

The park proposes to continue to improve fleet fuel economy by replacing older vehicles with more efficient ones, including an electric vehicle for local use.

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☒ **Serve as a model for energy efficiency, under Executive Order 13423, by ensuring Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.**

Tonto is building an administration building of "rammed earth" wall construction, the first such building in the NPS system. Rammed earth is exceptionally efficient in desert climates, is locally available, and can be built using unskilled labor (day-labor and other staff). Wall construction will begin in fall of '07. The building will meet LEED standards - the specific level has not yet been determined and the application to LEED not begun for lack of administrative support. An improvement in score could be achieved through the installation of photovoltaic panels (building is designed to accept them).

Rammed earth is also significant as it relates to the resources being preserved at Tonto - cliff dwellings using earthen walls. The link between past and present and the application of old technology in a new way can be an important interpretive story with many facets.

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Site: TONT

EDUCATION

☒ **Introduce young people and their families to national parks by using exciting media and technology.**

☒ **Increase the number of web hits through the introduction of advanced, interactive features that attract young people to national parks.**

The park proposes to engage all visitors but young ones in particular through the use of technology. Laser scans of archeological sites will create virtual models and be animated and used to help tell the archeological story of the park. Improvements in the park website will make it a more robust learning tool and will link to a more regional "virtual learning center" where the park's scientific information and analysis will be available. Audio and video podcasts will be available on-site and on-line.

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Site: TONT

PROFESSIONALISM

☒ Use strategic planning to promote management excellence.

☒ Establish a structured professional development curriculum to provide park managers with the skills to apply best business practices and superior leadership.

The park proposes to implement its 2007 core operation plan, which calls for leaving vacant at least two positions upon the next vacancy. Doing so will streamline park operations and focus all base-funded activities on the core mission of the park. It will also introduce financial flexibility where there has been none in recent years. However, depending upon future allocations, it is possible that the park will still not be funding all core work with base operating funds.

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